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Spying for jobs: *The CIA makes* *no secret of its job recruitment efforts*

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Washington, D.C. — So you want to be a spy.

The CIA's Larry Curran had a guy like that once, out on the West Coast.

"I said, 'My God, you're in the top of your class in medical school, you were in the top of your class at Stanford, and you're telling me you want to be a spy?' He said, 'Yes, I do,' and he meant it."

But Curran talked him out of it.

"Sometimes the best job we do is to counsel someone that this is not what they really want," he said. "We would have liked to have had him. He was the kind of guy who blows the top off the IQ test. He also was tall, good-looking and well-dressed. But he wouldn't do as well with us as in the medical profession."

Such are the vagaries of recruiting people

to work for the Central Intelligence Agency. It is perhaps the most public aspect of the nation's super-secret spying and information-gathering organization.

Curran, an 18-year CIA veteran and a native of St. Paul, Minn., is chief of the agency's recruitment operations division, headquartered in Arlington, Va. He oversees the CIA's far-flung recruitment efforts there and in field offices around the country — in Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles.

He keeps some secrets

There are only a few things Curran won't talk about: How many people are hired, and for what.

But everything else is wide open. In fact, the CIA spends a lot of time, money and effort to publicize its job openings and sign up new employees for The Company.

It is listed in white pages in telephone books, under government offices; it regularly advertises in newspapers, including The Milwaukee Journal; it posts notices in other government agencies; gets referrals from its existing employees; and it conducts an extensive recruitment program on college campuses, including obtaining prospects through faculty members.

But it's highly competitive. Curran estimates that the CIA hires only one of 15 persons it interviews — and many are screened out even before then.

"The profile of a career trainee is someone who is liberal-arts trained, has displayed academic excellence, has a sense of politics, history and economics in the affairs of men and nations, has foreign language proficiency or aptitude, is intelligent, resourceful, personable, persuasive, is a problem solver and ascends to heaven on the third day,"

Curran said.

And that's just for the generalists. Curran said the CIA also needed specialists of many stripes, including people trained in computer science, artificial intelligence, international relations, area studies, engineering, mathematics, physics, optics, systems analysis, languages, economics, geography, psychology, finance, personnel management, administration, communications and journalism.

No fancy words

"Writing is such a tremendous need," Curran said. "Our product is written to a scholarly audience and in a journalistic manner. There is a broad diversity of people. We want them hit instantly and clearly, not with fancy words or equivocation."

There also are clerical job openings for people without college degrees. Usually a high school diploma is required, but Curran said, "If we had a real sharp secretary who

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